

**DELAWARE COMMISSION OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
MEETING MINUTES
May 23, 2006**

Members Present: Morris, Ennis, Carroll, Endres, Harden, Kitson, Lardizzone, Newstadt, Spitzfaden, Thompson, Timberman and Wasson

Members Excused: Lank, Magner and Webb

Staff Present: Davila

Guests: Richard Citron (VA Medical Center), Dean Reid (Veterans Home Administrator), Brenda Dunning (Veterans Home Director of Nursing), Frank Davidson (KWVA), Burton Barr (NARFE), Ed Moczulski (LP Lo-DEL) and Cam Yorkston (DOS)

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance to our Nation's Flag.

Chairman Morris opened the meeting by reporting that the June Commission meeting will be held on June 20, 2006.

Mr. Reid updated the Commission about the Veterans Home progress. He introduced Brenda Dunning, the Director of Nursing for the Veterans Home and provided a short bio. Ms. Dunning provided some of her background information and her upcoming goals. Commissioner Carroll questioned the construction of the showers at the Veterans Home and Mr. Reid thanked him for his insight. The question was followed by discussion.

Chairman Morris read the response from the Governor to the Commission regarding a letter sent to her about HB 129. The response outlined the estimated cost of the bill and did not indicate that she would commit to the bill. There was discussion about this bill and other legislation.

Mr. Davidson reported that the Newark Parade was a success and flags were placed at the gravesites at the Northern Cemetery. Mr. Barr reported about a meeting with legislators and other legislative issues. Mr. Yorkston reported on the fundraising efforts for the Veterans Home and outlined the support needed from the Commission. Discussion followed.

Mr. Citron provided a hand-out and discussed information concerning the stolen veterans' information and discussion followed. He reported that the nursing home at the VA has expanded their gardens and there will be an Open House on June 14, 2006. Mr. Citron reported on a post deployment program that the Department of Defense (DOD) conducts 60 days after a deployed Guard unit comes back. The program is called the Post Deployment Health Risk Assessment and there are medical personnel in place to help do assessments. Other local VA personnel are invited to these programs to talk about various different health issues and other services the VA offers. He also reported that the proposal to establish an inpatient hospice unit is now a dead issue. He announced that they have hired a part-time orthopedic surgeon and a full-time physician in the emergency room. He reported that they are still awaiting word on the requested outpatient clinic for Dover. They have received additional funds for some of their outreach and mental health programs. There was discussion on the VA medical services and the handling of homeless veterans.

Commissioner Newstadt noted that the April Meeting Minutes should be corrected to read that the JWV installation and annual luncheon will be on May 28 and not April 28.

MOTION BY HARDEN TO ACCEPT APRIL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES AS CORRECTED, SECONDED BY THOMPSON, MOTION CARRIED.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

CEMETERY COMMITTEE

Commissioner Newstadt passed out photos of the improvements made at the Cemeteries. Mr. Davila explained the current and future planned improvements for the columbarium wall. There was discussion about a letter sent out by the Southern Cemetery to request donations for the irrigation system improvements. Commissioner Newstadt mentioned that they will be scheduling their next Southern Family Advisory Cemetery Committee (FACC) meeting in the next 35-40 days.

COMMEMORATIVE AFFAIRS

Commissioner Carroll reported that the MOPH will co-sponsor the Memorial Day Service with the Commission at the bridge. The MCL will co-sponsor ceremonies with the Commission at the Northern Cemetery.

FINANCE AND LOGISTICS

No report.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Commissioner Carroll reported that as of May 22, 2006, the total amount in the Veterans Home Fund was \$168,642.49. Chairman Morris made some brief comments about the new Veterans Home.

LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

Chairman Morris briefly discussed a letter produced in response to Senator Bunting's visit.

PERSONNEL

No report.

MONUMENTS & MEMORIALS

No report.

HOME DEDICATION

Commissioner Harden reported that the time for the Veterans Home dedication has been set for 11:00 AM on December 7, 2006. An invitation will be sent to Secretary Nicholson. Both Commissioner Harden and Mr. Davila discussed some of the arrangements being made for the dedication.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

No report.

ORGANIZATIONAL REPORTS

Timberman (CPVA) – The CPVA annual meeting and monthly Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for May 26, 2006. They will be electing officers.

Endres (40 & 8) – The Flag Day Ceremony at the Sussex Cemetery is scheduled for June 14, 2006, 2:00 PM. Mr. Davila now has all 26 flags (replicas of every flag the United States has utilized), in addition to the flags that the American Legion and 40 & 8 donated.

Carroll (MOPH) – Reported that their Convention will be on Saturday, June 24, 2006, at the DAFB museum. The national Convention will be in Las Vegas in the middle of August. A number of members from his organization attended the funeral in Seaford to support the family.

Lardizzone (DAV) – The DAV Department of Delaware Convention will be June 23, 2006, at their headquarters building, and June 24, 2006, at the Sheraton in Dover. The national Convention will be from August 10-15, 2006, in Chicago. The DAV ball game at the Blue Rocks is scheduled for July 30, 2006, 1:30 PM. If you plan to attend, Commissioner Lardizzone needs the money for the tickets (\$9) by June 30, 2006. DELVETS and American Legion Post 2 are having a Memorial Day Ceremony at the triangle in Dover on May 29, 2006, 11:00 AM.

Thompson (MCL) – The MCL in the Kent Co. is conducting a Ceremony at the Sharon Hill Cemetery on May 29, 2006. They will also be hosting the Ceremony at the Northern Cemetery on May 30, 2006, with the Commission.

Morris (American Legion) – He has been asked to speak at Laurel’s Post on May 29, 2006, and will be at the bridge Ceremony on May 30, 2006. American Legion is following through with its “Boys State Program and Trooper Youth Week”.

Ennis (KWVA) – The annual Korean picnic will be held on May 29, 2006, at Bellevue State Park. There is a monument dedication in Georgetown on May 29, 2006. The Executive Council meeting is scheduled for June 16, 2006. Chapter 1 will participate in the Flag Day Ceremony on June 14, 2006.

Kitson (VFW) – The VFW State Convention will be held at the Dover Sheraton on June 9-10, 2006. On June 11, 2006, the 1st Grand Scratch for the Grand of Delaware Military Order of the Cooties, which was installed on April 15, 2006, at our State Commander’s testimonial dinner. This will be first Military Order of the Cootie Grand since 1983. The national Convention will be in Reno, NV, the last week in August 2006.

Harden (WAVES) – WAVES was represented at the Newark Parade and will also be at the Bridge and Cemetery for Memorial Day. The VA Patient Carnival was a big success and thanked everyone who attended.

Wasson (DELVETS) – They will have their annual Memorial Service and pool opening on Saturday, May 27, 2006, at Post 1. A picnic will follow the activities. On May 29, 2006, they will put flags on the Cemetery grave markers for all their deceased members. They will be represented on May 30, 2006, at the bridge Ceremony.

Newstadt (JWV) – Attended the Newark Parade. The State Commander, Vice-Commander and himself put flags out at the Faulk Road Cemetery. The luncheon installation will be on May 28, 2006, and he will be the MC.

Mr. Davidson reported that there will be a KWVA reunion in Harrisburg, PA, from June 28 - July 2, 2006.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mr. Davila reported that there will be a Cornerstone laying Ceremony on December 7, 2006, and provided details.

NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Morris asked for assistance in helping a fellow Purple Heart member who is seeking recognition for a pilot who was killed in a downed aircraft. Mr. Davila said he would offer assistance.

ITEMS FOR THE GOOD AND WELFARE OF THE ORGANIZATION

Commissioner Newstadt reported on the C-141 reunion at Wright Patterson AFB.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: JUNE 20, 2006 (11:00 AM)

**LOCATION: Robbins Bldg, 802 Silver Lake Blvd, Suite 100
Dover, DE**

ADJOURNED